

Calhoun County Compliance Review Issued December 2007

At the March 2003 meeting of the Michigan Emergency Telephone Service Committee (ETSC), the ETSC voted to conduct random compliance reviews of 9-1-1 expenditures of Michigan Counties. These reviews would be for expenditures of funds generated through the provisions of the amended 9-1-1 Act, PA 32 of 1986 (PA 32). County 9-1-1 revenues include: wireless revenues distributed to counties through the State; revenues collected through county 9-1-1 surcharges on land line phones; and dispatcher training funds distributed to primary public safety answering points (PSAPs).

On May 9, 2006, the ETSC Certification Subcommittee randomly selected Calhoun County for a compliance review. Subcommittee members Charon, Gribler, Berenbaum, Nystrom, and Miller-Brown were named to the Calhoun County Compliance Review Team* by the chair. The years 2004, 2005, 2006 (to date) were decided as the time period for the focus of the review.

On May 30, 2006, a letter advising Calhoun County of its review was sent to the Calhoun County 9-1-1 Coordinator, Ms. Jill Fish. The letter requested the following information from Calhoun County:

- The Calhoun County 9-1-1 plan
- A copy of the 2003, 2004 and 2005 9-1-1 budgets for each PSAP
- Copies of agreements between the county and PSAPs
- List of appropriate PSAP managers and their phone numbers
- Copies of budgetary reports or journals including the line items for 9-1-1 funds receipts for each PSAP
- Copy of indirect costs, if they are being charged to 9-1-1
- Copy of wireless training funds, revenue journal entries and expenditures and completed ETSC 510 forms from 2003 to date for each PSAP that received ETSC Training Funds
- Name of a contact person to serve as a coordinator for this review
- Written description of fund distribution (wireless and wireline) for all PSAPs

The requested information was received by the State 9-1-1 Administrator's Office in a timely and organized manner.

Background:

The PSAPs in Calhoun County are funded through a combination of wireless and landline 9-1-1 surcharge, and general funds. Calhoun County implemented Enhanced 9-1-1 in 1992. The county became Phase I wireless 9-1-1 compliant in 2000. Phase II wireless 9-1-1 was deployed in 2004 and 2005. Since the wireless 9-1-1 distributions began in 2000, Calhoun County has been certified by the ETSC as eligible to receive its portion of state wireless 9-1-1 funds. The Calhoun County landline 9-1-1 surcharge is .65 month per month and is based on county commissioner resolution

The City of Battle Creek Central Communications (BCCC) is a local agency (Battle Creek Public Safety) within Calhoun County and serves as the PSAP for the majority of the county's 9-1-1 call volume and emergency services dispatching. The cities of Albion and Marshall each maintain their own PSAP. Service agreements exist through intergovernmental contracts and the Calhoun County 9-1-1 Plan for the distribution of 9-1-1 funds to the public entities and for the dispatching services of BCCC. Operating policy and procedures for the BCCC are established through the Calhoun County Emergency Telephone District Board.

County 9-1-1 Fund Distribution

All 9-1-1 funds received by the county are remitted into a separate E-911 Fund # 264. Landline 9-1-1 surcharge funds are remitted into a separate account (County Fund # 264.2428). The funds are then distributed as follows: City of Albion - 7%, City of Marshall - 7.5%, City of Battle Creek - 70.5% + 5%, and the County of Calhoun - 10%. Ledgers indicate that the funds are distributed to the local entities on a timely basis.

Wireless funds are remitted into a separate account (County Fund # 264.2350). The funds are then distributed as follows: City of Albion - 7%, City of Marshall - 7.5%, City of Battle Creek - 70.5% and additional 5%, County of Calhoun - 10%. Ledgers confirm that the funds are distributed to the local entities on a timely basis.

Review Process:

Upon receipt and initial review of the Calhoun County documentation, meetings and site visits were scheduled with members of county administration, the PSAP directors for Albion, Marshall, Battle Creek and the Calhoun County Compliance Review team.

Meeting with Calhoun County Administration December 19, 2006.

The review team met with County Administrator Greg Purcell, Administrator's Assistant Alice McDonagh, and County Finance Representative Jeryl Schoepke. The accounting documentation was reviewed from 2003 through 2005. The 10% portion of the 9-1-1 surcharge that is retained by the county is not used for administrative costs, but for direct costs incurred by the county for 9-1-1. Funds from 2003 to the end of 2004 were also used for planning/development study costs for consolidation. (A failed millage proposal in 2004 ended plans for a county-wide consolidated dispatch project). Currently, the county's portion of 9-1-1 funds are dedicated to allowable public safety communications equipment and infrastructure. There is an emergency telephone service board that meets monthly.

Findings and Summaries:

The respective summary for each PSAP's (BCCC, Marshall, and Albion) operations and funding compliance are as follows.

Battle Creek Central Communications:

May 1, 2007 visit to the Calhoun County dispatch center, Battle Creek Central Communications**:

Battle Creek Central Communications (BCCC) dispatches for eight police departments, (including the sheriff department, Battle Creek City, Emmett Public Safety, Homer Village Police Department, Springfield Public Safety, the Battle Creek post of the Michigan State Police), four emergency medical service (EMS), and eighteen fire departments.

In 2005, BCCC received an estimated 101,493 landline 9-1-1 calls and an estimated 93,199 wireless 9-1-1 calls. Calhoun County logged 141,532 dispatched incidents in 2005. BCCC employs twenty full-time dispatchers, two supervisors and a full-time director. All wireless 9-1-1 calls in the county, with the exception of the cellular tower sites identified as serving the cities of Albion and Marshall, are routed to BCCC.

The dispatch center has its own secure entrance. Consisting of about 1,700 square feet, it houses the communications room, 9-1-1 supervisor's office, director's office, conference room, restroom, equipment room, and break room. The 9-1-1 phone system is capable of taking Phase I and II wireless 9-1-1 calls. The phone system also interfaces with computerized dispatching (CAD) and mapping systems. Dispatchers demonstrated the wireless 9-1-1 re-bid and mapping functions.

There are plans for BCCC dispatch center to be relocated to Fire Station No. 1 within the City of Battle Creek. The resolution to relocate the Public Safety Dispatch Center was passed on February 6, 2007 by the Battle Creek City Commission. The budget authorized for this relocation is \$270,000 from the General Capital Improvement Fund. Albion and Marshall each operate PSAPs for their respective jurisdictions.

A combination of general fund and local contractual agreements provide the revenue for BCCC's regular budgeted operational costs. BCCC uses its portion of the wireless and landline 9-1-1 surcharge for allowable equipment, software, and maintenance agreements.

Dispatchers Troskey, Vogt, Smith, Kevser, Schaub, and supervisor Owen were on duty on the morning the compliance review team was at the center. The center has six full consoles. The consoles have radio functions, CAD, 9-1-1 call screens, and mapping for wireless 9-1-1 calls. There is an emergency generator and all critical equipment is connected to the generator and a system UPS. There is an extended-time recorder that logs radio and telephone transmissions. Each dispatcher also has access to short-term audio play-back at their consoles.

Dispatch staff has close access to the restroom and a break area. There are usually a minimum of four dispatchers and a supervisor on duty. Policies and other manuals are kept in the center. Additionally, Calhoun County utilizes a Printrac CAD. The dispatchers are not trained for emergency medical services (EMS) dispatch as EMS dispatching is done through the transfer of 9-1-1 calls to the county-wide EMS provider. Automatic mutual aid dispatching system for medical first responders (MFRs) and structure fires is done. (Note – Olivet, Belford, and Springport FDs do not have MFRs).

There is a policy and procedure manual for BCCC, however, it is in need of review and updating. (See recommended actions below). There is a closest car policy in place. At the time of the on site review the Sheriff's Department and the State Police were going to split patrols by sections of the county.

BCCC Funding Summary:

Accounting for BCCC is performed on a fiscal year basis. All 9-1-1 surcharge funds received by BCC from the county are remitted into separate accounts (#205-4911-51960 for landline and # 205-4911-51965 for wireless).

Annual Operating Budget for 2003 = 1,517,456
Annual Operating Budget for 2004 = 1,621,853
Annual Operating Budget for 2005 = 1,593,878

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2003 = 163,739
Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2004 = 151,095
Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2005 = 142,200

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2003 = 438,893
9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2004 = 422,999
9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2005 = 416,909

Training Fund:

The 2002 training distributions were received and used by BCCC, however, BCCC did not spend down their 2002 allocation within the two-year time limit guidelines established by the ETSC. BCCC did not apply for training monies from 2003 through 2006. In 2007 BCCC returned \$7,725.71 to the ETSC Dispatcher Training Fund to become eligible for the 2007 ETSC training fund distribution. (The training funds are maintained in separate account # 205.3352.7590).

Training Fund Distribution BCCC

Training Fund Distribution 2002 = 10,632
Training Fund Distribution 2003 = -0-
Training Fund Distribution 2004 = -0-
Training Fund Distribution 2005 = -0-
Training Fund Distribution 2006 = -0-

Training Fund Expenditures for BCCC

Training Fund Expenditures 2002 = 1,606
Training Fund Expenditures 2003 = 1,840
Training Fund Expenditures 2004 = -0-
Training Fund Expenditures 2005 = -0-
Training Fund Expenditures 2006 = -0-

BCCC Recommendations:

Necessary Corrective Action:

No necessary corrective action noted at this time.

Recommended Action:

1) Update of operational policies and procedures – While there was a policy and procedure manual in place for the dispatch operations, many were outdated and in need of review and revision.

2) Ongoing training for dispatch staff – There is a formal documented training program in place for new dispatchers. But as evidenced by the lack of ETSC Training Fund usage, there is little ongoing training for dispatchers after the initial training period. A system of regular training for veteran dispatchers should be implemented.

3) Evaluation of relocation of BCCC - The commission of the City of Battle Creek passed a resolution on February 6, 2007 to relocate the BCCC dispatcher center. The relocation of the Dispatch Center will create much needed space at the Police Station for police operations by taking advantage of presently unused and underused space at Fire Station No. 1. However, at this juncture, members of the review team believe that there are concerns related to the move that should be further considered before the relocation occurs. These concerns included: less space, space not suitable for a dispatch operation, security, and emergency generator located inside of the building that causes a distinct odor of diesel throughout the building.

Additionally, an Administrative Finding to the County 9-1-1 Plan should be done to indicate the PSAP location change until such time as the move can be indicated during a future opening of the 9-1-1 Plan.

City of Marshall Police Department Communications:

December 19, 2006 visit to Marshall Police Department (MPD) dispatch center and meeting with Chief Olson and Deputy Chief Pehrson:

The center has one fully functional console. The console has radio functions, CAD, 9-1-1 call screens, and mapping for wireless 9-1-1 calls. There is an emergency generator for the police department building and all critical equipment is connected to the generator and a system UPS. There is an extended-time

recorder that logs radio and telephone transmissions. The dispatcher also has access to short-term audio play-back at the consoles.

There is access to the restroom and a break area. There is usually one dispatcher on duty and the deputy police chief serves as supervisor. In the deputy chief's absence the command officer for road patrol serves as the supervisor. Policies and other manuals are kept in the communications area. The dispatchers are trained for emergency medical services (EMS) dispatch and use the Priority System developed by the National Academy of Emergency Dispatching.

In 2005, MPD received an estimated 3,641 landline 9-1-1 calls and an estimated 2,394 wireless 9-1-1 calls. MPD logged 9,729 dispatched incidents in 2005. MPD employs four full time and one half-time dispatchers. MPD answers the 9-1-1 calls for landline and wireless (as determined by specific tower sites). The dispatcher has electronic mapping and demonstrated the Phase II wireless 9-1-1 re-bid and call plotting functions for members of the review team.

Landline and wireless 9-1-1 surcharge funds

The landline and wireless surcharge funds distributed to MPD by the county are remitted into a separate account (Fund # 792-000-675.30). The funds are used to pay for the allowable day-to-day operations of the 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatching. These costs include: utilities, radio system maintenance, dispatch computers and maintenance, office supplies directly related to 9-1-1, generator expenses, and telephone costs. Costs of wages, benefits, accounting, and administration are absorbed by the city general fund through its public safety operations budget.

MPD Funding Summary:

Annual 9-1-1 Operating Budget for 2003 = \$290,000

Annual 9-1-1 Operating Budget for 2004 = \$290,000

Annual 9-1-1 Operating Budget for 2005 = \$290,000

9-1-1 funds used for equipment and communications 2003 = \$43,203

9-1-1 funds used for equipment and communications 2004 = \$51,740

9-1-1 funds used for equipment and communications 2005 = \$37,732

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2003 = 13,248

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2004 = 14,077

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2005 = 15,255

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2003 = 40,891

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2004 = 39,410

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2005 = 38,842

Training Funds

All wireless training funds are receipted and maintained in a separate account (# 792-000-955.17).

While spend-down on MPD's training distribution had not been met in accordance with the two-year time limit established by the ETSC in recent years, spend-down was met in 2006 making MPD eligible for 2007 application. (Accounting calculations for all training funds are done on a calendar year basis).

Training Fund Distribution for City of Marshall

Training Fund Distribution 2002 = 1,701

Training Fund Distribution 2003 = 2,770

Training Fund Distribution 2004 = 1,540

Training Fund Distribution 2005 = 2,294

Training Fund Distribution 2006 = -0-

Training Fund Expenditures for City of Marshall

Training Fund Expenditures 2002 = -0-
Training Fund Expenditures 2003 = 1,498
Training Fund Expenditures 2004 = 1,393
Training Fund Expenditures 2005 = 703
Training Fund Expenditures 2006 = 2,883

City of Marshall Police Department Communications Recommendations:

Necessary Corrective Action:

No necessary corrective action noted at this time.

Recommended Action:

- 1) Completion of the policy and procedure manual that is currently in development.
- 2) Develop a formal documented training program for newly hired dispatchers - The current training program is not structured nor is it well-documented; a more formal and documented program such as a Communications Training Officer (CTO) program should be put in place to facilitate consistency in the training of new dispatchers.

Albion Police Department Communications Summary:

December 19, 2006 visit to Albion Police Department (APD) dispatch center and meeting with Lt. Daniel Strowbridge:

The center has one fully functional console and a back-up position. The console has radio functions, CAD, 9-1-1 call screens, and mapping for wireless 9-1-1 calls. There is an emergency generator for the police department building and all critical equipment is connected to the generator and a system UPS. There is an extended-time recorder that logs radio and telephone transmissions. The dispatcher has access to short-term audio play-back at the consoles.

There is access to the restroom and a break area. There is usually one dispatcher on duty and the Administrative Lieutenant serves as supervisor. In the lieutenant's absence the command officer for road patrol serves as the supervisor. Policies and other manuals are kept in the communications area. The dispatchers are not trained for emergency medical services (EMS) dispatch as medical calls are transferred directly to EMS service. There is a formal documented training program for newly hired dispatchers.

In 2005, APD received an estimated 3,715 landline 9-1-1 calls and an estimated 3,295 wireless 9-1-1 calls. APD logged 9,872 dispatched incidents in 2005. APD employs four full-time and one half-time dispatchers. MPD answers the 9-1-1 calls for landline and wireless (as determined by specific tower sites). The dispatcher has electronic mapping and demonstrated the Phase II wireless 9-1-1 re-bid and call plotting functions for members of the review team.

Landline and wireless 9-1-1 surcharge funds

The landline and wireless surcharge funds distributed to Albion by the county are remitted into a separate account, but wireless training funds are also receipted into the same account (Fund # 101-371-679.00). The funds are used to pay for the day-to-day operations of the 9-1-1 center. These costs include: utilities, radio system maintenance, dispatch computers and maintenance, office supplies directly related to 9-1-1,

generator expenses, and telephone costs. Costs of accounting and payroll/benefits administration are absorbed by the city general fund through its public safety operations.

City of Albion Police Department Funding Summary:

An annual operating budget for 9-1-1 for the city of Albion is not available for this report as the department did not separate its 9-1-1 funds from its other funding for the years of the review. Additionally, the budget for the PSAP was integrated with the budget for the entire PD's operations. However, a review of its overall budget and known expenses for the PSAP operation served to confirm that the expenses incurred by Albion PD for its PSAP operations as allowable expenses under the ETSC guidelines exceed the amount of its distributions of wireless and wireline 9-1-1 funds. Furthermore, Albion PD has been directed by the ETSC in *Necessary Corrective Action* as listed below to separate its 9-1-1 funds from other sources of revenue.

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2003 = 12,365

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2004 = 13,139

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2005 = 14,238

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2003 = 38,165

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2004 = 36,783

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2005 = 36,253

Training Funds

The wireless training funds are not receipted and maintained in a separate account (see *Necessary Corrective Action* below). The 2002 and 2003 training distributions have been used in full in accordance with the two-year time limit established by the ETSC, making Albion Public Safety eligible for 2006 application. (Accounting calculations for all training funds are done on a calendar year basis).

Training Fund Expenditures for City of Albion

Training Fund Expenditures 2002 = 485

Training Fund Expenditures 2003 = 538

Training Fund Expenditures 2004 = 1,203

Training Fund Expenditures 2005 = 1,661

Training Fund Expenditures 2006 = 2,021

Training Fund Distribution for Albion Public Safety

Training Fund Distribution 2002 = 1,276

Training Fund Distribution 2003 = 2,077

Training Fund Distribution 2004 = 1,155

Training Fund Distribution 2005 = 2,294

Training Fund Distribution 2006 = 2,595

City of Albion Police Department Communications Recommendations:

Necessary Corrective Action:

- 1) A separate account for the wireless training must be established and the current balance of unused wireless training funds be transferred into that account.
- 2) Separate accounts for the wireless and landline funds must be established and expenses out of the accounts for allowable purposes must be documented.

Recommended Action:

- 1) The policy and procedure manual is combined with CTO documentation. These should be updated as two separate manuals
- 2) Develop an integrated map for the wireless 9-1-1 calls - The wireless 9-1-1 calls are currently plotted on pre-packaged "off the shelf" software. While this is an acceptable method for plotting location on wireless 9-1-1 calls, a more localized system that quickly includes updated street information may be beneficial in wireless 9-1-1 call location.

Overall Final Summary for Calhoun County:

The Calhoun County 9-1-1 Plan was enacted in April of 1992. The Plan is current and in compliance with P.A. 32. The 9-1-1 plan creates the Calhoun County Emergency Telephone District Board. The Emergency Telephone District Board helps facilitate communication and coordination of Calhoun County Dispatch/E911 in matters of county-wide 911 interests.

Necessary Corrective Action:

No necessary corrective action noted at this time.

Recommended Action:

- 1) There appeared to be some issues with in-building coverage and cellular interference with communications system within the city of Battle Creek that the BCCC and other members of the public safety community were addressing. The review team encourages that all parties involved continue to pursue solutions.

The accounting system in place at Calhoun County properly keeps the 9-1-1 funds separate from other county funds, both at the revenue and expenditure side. Interest is collected on the principal and transferred to the respective 9-1-1 accounts in a timely manner. In accordance with PA 32, all Calhoun County 9-1-1 funds are used only for allowable 9-1-1 expenses.

In closing, based upon the documentation requested, made available to, and reviewed by the committee, Calhoun County and its 9-1-1 operation are in compliance with the requirements of PA 32, as amended.

Submitted By:

Dale Gribler Harriet Miller-Brown

December 2007

* Due to his transfer to another corporate department prior to the completion of the review, Mr. Berenbaum was unable to participate in the full review process. Mr. Nystrom's retirement and Mr. Charon's unexpected death also occurred prior to the issuance of the Calhoun County Compliance Review Report.

** The Battle Creek Central Communications site visit was postponed from the December 20, 2006 date until May 1, 2007 due to a significant and unexpected injury to Ms. Fish on December 19, 2006.